

Get Your Flu Shot

Every year, many South Dakotans become ill or die from influenza-“the flu”. In 2005, more than 5700 tested positive for the flu and 11 South Dakotans are known to have died from it. Having diabetes puts you at high risk for complications including death. Protect yourself by getting a flu shot. Protect your loved ones by encouraging them to get the shot if they are in one of the following groups:

- Aged 50 years and older
- Residents of long-term care facilities
- Adults and children with chronic health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease or kidney disease
- Adults and children with any condition that may cause a weakened respiratory system such as cognitive dysfunction, spinal cord injuries, seizure disorders, or other nerve or muscle disorders
- Adults and children with a weakened immune system (including immune system problems caused by medicines or with HIV/AIDS)
- Adults and children with chronic disorders of the pulmonary or cardiovascular systems, including asthma
- Women who will be pregnant during the peak of the flu season (generally October-May)
- Children aged 6–59 months
- Children 6 months to 18 years of age who are on long-term aspirin therapy
- Household contacts and out-of-home caregivers of children less than 5 years of age
- People that live with or care for those at high risk for complications
- Health-care personnel who provide direct patient care

Talk with your doctor or nurse before getting a flu shot if you have ever had a severe allergic reaction to eggs or to a previous flu shot. The flu shot is covered by Medicare Part B, Medicaid and most health insurance policies.

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Have You Gotten Your Pneumonia Shot?

What is the pneumococcal shot?

The pneumococcal shot, sometimes called the pneumonia shot, protects you from getting a serious infection in your blood or brain that can cause dangerous health problems, hospitalization or death.

Who should get the pneumococcal shot?

- People 65 years old or older
- People with a serious long-term health problems such as diabetes, heart disease (congestive heart failure or cardiomyopathy), sickle cell disease, alcohol abuse, lung diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or emphysema, or liver cirrhosis
- People whose resistance to infection is lowered due to Hodgkin's disease; multiple myeloma; treatment with long-term steroids; bone marrow or organ transplant; kidney failure; HIV/AIDS; lymphoma, leukemia, or other cancers; nephrotic syndrome; damaged spleen or no spleen; radiation therapy and certain cancer drugs
- The pneumococcal shot is part of the recommended shot schedule for children

Will the shot make me sick?

The shot is very safe and does not make you sick. Some people get a little swelling and soreness where they get the shot. This usually goes away in a day or two. The shot is very good at preventing severe disease, hospitalization, and death. However, it is not guaranteed to prevent all symptoms in all people.

When can I get the pneumococcal shot?

You can get the shot at any time of the year. It is available whenever you go to your doctor. Make sure you ask about it.

How many times do I have to get a shot?

Most people only need ONE shot. This protects them for a lifetime. Some people might need to get a booster shot after 5 years.

Do I have to pay for the shot?

Medicare Part B, Medicaid and most health insurance plans pay for the shot.

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